

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

Gluten Challenge

Gluten challenges involve testing whether a child is still sensitive to gluten in a safe, controlled way.

Introducing Gluten into your child's diet again, as a gluten challenge, is necessary to confirm the need for continuing on a gluten free diet for life. It is important that an adequate amount of gluten is being consumed by the child for the initial biopsy or for a gluten challenge.

If your child has no symptoms relating to eating gluten they should start the challenge **three months** before their biopsy date and continue on the diet.

A minimum of **four to six weeks** is recommended to maximise the likelihood of a clear diagnosis. Occasionally this may not be possible because of severe reactions to gluten containing foods. If this occurs please contact your Paediatrician or Dietitian to discuss. Getting a positive diagnosis is really important to avoid following a restricted diet for the rest of their lives unnecessarily.

Recommended for most children

Typically, 10-15g gluten per day is required for adequate intake in most children (for example: 2-3g gluten are contained in one medium bread slice, one Weetabix® for Shredded Wheat®, two rusks or digestive biscuits and 4 tablespoons of cooked pasta).

Aim for the child to have at least two (preferably three) gluten containing meals per day, containing at least 5g of gluten per meal.

In infants and young children

It may be impossible to achieve intakes of 10g gluten daily in young children. Aim for two gluten containing meals per day, where bread, pasta, gluten containing breakfast cereal form the carbohydrate component of the meal for example: ½ Weetabix for breakfast and 1 slice bread for lunch should be sufficient. **Please note:** using inadvertent gluten containing foods alone, such as gravy on a meal is insufficient.



Patient Information

The following foods contain 2-3g of wheat protein (**gluten**) when eaten in the stated amounts:

- Ordinary Bread - 1 medium slice from a large loaf
- 1 Weetabix or 1 Shredded Wheat
- 1 bowl (20g) Sugar Puffs or Puffed Wheat
- 3 medium-sized biscuits or 2 Digestives or 3 Cream Crackers
- 2 Rusks (original or low sugar)
- ½ pitta bread
- 1 croissant
- 1 slice cake (30g)
- 1 portion sponge pudding (50g)
- 45g pastry
- 30g flour
- 20g raw semolina
- 200g (7oz) tinned semolina pudding (½ large tin)
- 4 tablespoons (60g) cooked or tinned spaghetti
- 2 large or 3 chipolata sausages (Check they contain wheat containing rusk)
- 3 fish fingers (in breadcrumbs or batter)

University Hospitals Coventry & Warwickshire NHS Trust Coventry Dietitians

Contact Telephone: 024 7696 6161

(The advice in this sheet is based on the “Guideline for the diagnosis and management of Coeliac disease in children” A Coeliac Working Group of BSPGHAN. 2012)

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